

# Plan for emergencies.

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## Are you prepared for a hazardous waste emergency?

Do your employees know how to protect themselves in the event of a hazardous waste spill? Have you designated an emergency coordinator who is on the premises or on call at all times? If not, you may be putting your employees, neighbors, business, and the environment at risk.

Thinking ahead and planning for emergencies, as required under the Dangerous Waste Regulations (Chapter 173-303 WAC), can help you prevent a small hazardous waste spill from turning into a dangerous and expensive contamination problem.

## Here's how to begin.

Make sure that you're not generating any more hazardous waste than you absolutely must. It's worth it to find ways to generate less. Businesses that generate less than 220 pounds per month typically don't need to comply with the emergency planning requirements on this Checklist Fact Sheet. If you generate hazardous waste in quantities larger than 220 pounds or 2.2 pounds of certain pesticides or poisons, you must:

- ◆ Designate an emergency coordinator. At all times, there must be at least one employee on the premises or on call (able to respond to an emergency at the facility within a short period of time) who is responsible for coordinating all emergency response measures. It's also a good idea to have at least one back-up emergency coordinator.
- ◆ Make sure the emergency coordinator is familiar with the:
  - operations and activities at your site,
  - location and hazardous properties of all the wastes you handle,
  - location of all records,
  - layout of your facility (inside and outside), and
  - agreements you have made with state or local authorities and outside emergency response contractors for their assistance (see Checklist Fact Sheet 4).

## Don't forget your employees.

- Educate your employees on the proper waste handling and emergency procedures that are relevant to their job responsibilities.

This means that a person who packages hazardous wastes for shipment should receive a more comprehensive training program than the bookkeeper who occasionally walks through the hazardous waste accumulation area.

- If you generate per month, or accumulate at any time, more than 2,200 pounds of hazardous waste or 2.2 pounds of certain pesticides or poisons you must also comply with the training requirements in Table 1.

Smaller generators can use Table 1 as a guide for developing their own employee training programs.

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| <b>Table 1:</b> |
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**Additional Training Requirements for Generators of 2,200 Pounds or More or 2.2 Pounds Of Certain Pesticides Or Poisons.**

**Include the following topics in your training program:**

- the capabilities and proper use of emergency equipment including communications and alarm systems,
- how to respond to fires, explosions, spills, releases to air, and ground water contamination incidents,
- procedures for using, inspecting, repairing and replacing your emergency equipment (and monitoring equipment, such as temperature or pressure indicators, if you have any),
- the details of any automatic waste feed cut-off systems, and
- steps for the shut-down of operations.

**Provide annual refresher training for employees.**

**Prepare and follow a written training plan which includes:**

- a listing of the job title, job description and name of the employee filling each position that relates to hazardous waste management in your business,
- a written description of the type and amount of both introductory and refresher training you require for each position, and
- records documenting that your employees have received and completed the required training. (Keep training records for your current personnel until you stop operating, and for former employees for at least three years).

**You'll need a plan of action.**

- Prepare and post near all phones and intercoms, an **emergency directory** containing:

the name and telephone number (office and home) of the emergency coordinator and his or her backups,

a description and the location of emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers, spill control materials and an alarm system,

the telephone number of the fire department, unless you have a direct alarm.

If you generate per month, or accumulate at any time, more than 2,200 pounds of hazardous waste, you should put this information into your contingency plan (described below) in addition to posting it.

- If you generate per month, or accumulate at any time, more than 2,200 pounds of hazardous waste, you must prepare a **written contingency plan** covering the topics outlined in Table 2.
- Develop **emergency procedures** for responding to hazardous waste fires, explosions, spills and releases to the air.

Review Table 3, which contains a summary of the emergency procedures required by the Dangerous Waste Regulations. You'll notice that there are **more** emergency procedures for generators of greater than 2,200 pounds per month than for generators of less than 2,200 pounds. Adapt these procedures to your waste activities and waste types so that you and your employees are prepared to handle potential emergencies quickly and safely.

**Table 2:**

**Written Contingency Plans for Generators of 2,200 Pounds or More  
or 2.2 pounds of certain pesticides or poisons.**

**Your written contingency plan must include:**

- a description of **actions** employees will take in an emergency;
- a description of any **arrangements** you have made with local police and fire departments, hospitals, contractors and state or local emergency response teams to coordinate emergency services (see Fact Sheet 4),
- your **emergency directory**, with the primary emergency coordinator clearly identified,
- an up-to-date **list of emergency equipment** on the premises, and
- an **evacuation plan** for your employees that describes evacuation routes, alternate routes, and the signal you will use to begin evacuation.

**Table 3: Required Emergency Procedures.**

**For Generators of Less than 2,200 Pounds**

During an emergency, the Emergency Coordinator must:

- In the event of a fire, call the fire department or attempt to extinguish the fire.
- In the event of a spill, contain the flow of the spill as much as possible, cleanup the waste and any contaminated materials as soon as practicable, and call the nearest Ecology regional office.
- If a fire, explosion or other release could threaten human health outside your business or could reach streams, lakes or ground water, call the nearest Ecology regional office and the National Response Center (1-800-424-8802) with the following information:

Your name, address and RCRA Identification Number (see Checklist Fact Sheet 2),

Date, time and type of incident,

Amount and type of hazardous waste involved in the incident,

Extent of any injuries, and

Estimate of the amount of recovered materials and how you have managed these wastes.

**For Generators of 2,200 Pounds or More or 2.2 pounds of certain pesticides or poisons.**

During an emergency, the Emergency Coordinator must:

- Activate internal alarms to notify employees.
- Call state or local agencies if their help is needed.
- Identify the released material's character (Is it flammable?), exact source, amount and the area it covers.
- Assess the possible hazards to human health and the environment.
- Call local authorities if evacuation of local areas may be advisable.
- Call the nearest Ecology regional office and the National Response Center (1-800-424-8802) and give them the following information:
  - name and telephone number of the caller,
  - name and address of the business or organization,
  - time and type of hazardous waste incident,
  - name and amount of the material(s) involved
  - extent of any injuries, and
  - possible hazards to human health or the environment beyond your property.
- Take steps to control the incident such as stopping equipment, removing or isolating containers and collecting any released material.
- If appropriate, monitor for leaks, pressure buildup, gas generation or ruptures while you're handling the incident.
- Immediately after the emergency:

Properly manage the recovered waste and contaminated materials (soil, water, rags, clothing), and

Make sure that emergency equipment is cleaned and fit for use.
- Call the nearest Ecology regional office and appropriate local authorities before resuming operations in the affected areas of your business.

